

Thant Sees Obstacles to U.N. Action, Calls for Restraint by All Parties

By Louis B. Fleming
The Los Angeles Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Feb. 12—Secretary General U. Thant urgently appealed today for a conference inside or outside the United Nations to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the war in Viet-Nam.

He indicated he will not summon a meeting of the Security Council because of the obstacles to direct U.N. action.

But he urged all parties to exercise restraint and to refrain from any action which might enlarge the conflict.

Thant made the appeal in the form of a press statement after consulting with Ambassadors Roger Seydoux of France, President of the Security Council this month, and Alex Quaison-Sackey of Ghana, President of the General Assembly.

He plans no further initia-

tive, his press spokesman said. No direct appeal will be made to delegations. No consultations are planned with the interested parties unless they themselves seek it, according to the spokesman.

In this context, the appeal appeared to be nothing more than a reiteration of the press statements made last summer by the Secretary General. As a news conference in July he specifically endorsed reconvening the 1954 Geneva Conference on Southeast Asia. Informed sources said today that he still favors that plan.

"I am greatly disturbed by recent events in Southeast Asia and particularly by the seriously deteriorating situation in Viet-Nam," Thant said. "My fear, frankly, is in regard to the dangerous possibilities of escalation because such a situation, if it should

get out of control, would obviously pose the gravest threat to the peace of the world."

The Secretary General insisted that a political solution, not a military approach, is the only way to solve the controversy.

He also noted his authority under the U.N. charter to call a meeting of the Security Council but said that a United Nations solution is difficult "in view of its past history and the fact that some of the principal parties are not represented in the United Nations."

This presumably was a reference to the Security Council meetings last August after the Gulf of Tonkin incidents. A Council invitation was rejected by North Viet-Nam which, like Communist China, is not a member of the world organization.



Jacques Faizant, from Paris Presse

"I've been thinking it over." (The neutralization of Southeast Asia).